

Compass



BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH
Vol. 31 Issue 13 • May 2026

COLOSSIANS 2:16-23 (NLT)

¹⁶ So don't let anyone condemn you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating certain holy days or new moon ceremonies or Sabbaths. ¹⁷ For these rules are only shadows of the reality yet to come. And Christ himself is that reality. ¹⁸ Don't let anyone condemn you by insisting on pious self-denial or the worship of angels, ¹⁹ saying they have had visions about these things. Their sinful minds have made them proud, and they are not connected to Christ, the head of the body. For he holds the whole body together with its joints and ligaments, and it grows as God nourishes it. ²⁰ You have died with Christ, and he has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world. So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as, ²¹ "Don't handle! Don't taste! Don't touch!"? ²² Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them. ²³ These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self-denial, and severe bodily discipline. But they provide no help in conquering a person's evil desires.

.....

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF REST?

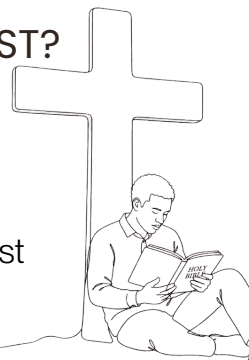
Across our country, there have been laws that prohibited certain activities on Sundays. At one point, rules were put in place for everything from businesses not selling cars or alcohol to people avoiding cooking or cleaning in their own homes. All of this was done, supposedly, to honor God.

In Exodus 16, God, through Moses, instructed the Israelites to observe a Sabbath rest. It was to be a day when no manna was gathered. More importantly, the Sabbath was meant to teach the Israelites to trust God alone as their provider. Over time, however, they had begun to think it was by their own hands that they ate. The focus shifted from trusting God to simply following rules about what could or could not be done on a certain day. The purpose of Sabbath rest was not just about stopping work, but learning to trust God and rest in His care.

In his letter to the Church at Colossae (Col 2:16-23), Paul warns believers not to get so caught up with practices and legalism that they lose sight of the true focus of worship: Jesus. Paul encourages them to understand that their faith must rest in Christ, not merely in rituals, holidays and religious activities. He also warns them about those who become too proud and wise in claiming to know exactly how God should be worshipped. True rest is found not in rituals alone, but in trusting Jesus Christ completely.

HOW DO I MAKE SURE I AM FINDING TRUE REST?

In Verse 20, Paul reminds believers that because they have died with Christ, they have been freed from the spiritual powers of this world. This truth still applies to us today. Seek Wisdom through prayer, Scripture, and Godly counsel when clarity is needed. Our relationship with Christ is built on faith, strengthened as we continue to grow deeper in Him. When we remember that He is Lord, even of the Sabbath, we can rest in His grace and provision.



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON FOR

MAY 24, 2026

SUNDAY SCHOOL TITLE

A WELL-EARNED REST

SUNDAY SCHOOL SCRIPTURE

Mark 2:18-28

MAIN THOUGHT

Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for humankind and not humankind for the Sabbath, so the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath."

Mark 2:27-28, NRSVue

CLOSING PRAYER

God grant me the heart to seek you always and give me the discernment to be aware of those things that distract my focus on you.
In Jesus' name, Amen.